

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend Claims 1, 6, 7 and 13 and add new Claims 17-26 as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) A bearing assembly comprising:  
  
a guide having a top side provided with a guide surface comprising a magnetic body;  
  
a moving body which moves along the guide surface;  
  
a first movable guide which moves along the guide surface and moves said moving body in a first direction;  
  
a second movable guide which moves along the guide surface and moves said moving body in a second direction which is orthogonal to the first direction;  
  
a bearing provided on a portion of ~~a moving body~~ said first and second movable guides that opposes the guide surface ~~for the purpose of levitating the moving body above the guide surface, said moving body moving along the guide surface;~~ and  
  
a magnet, which has an opposing surface that opposes the guide surface, provided on ~~the moving body~~ said first and second movable guide for the purpose of applying a magnetic attractive force between ~~the moving body~~ said first and second movable guides and the guide surface;  
  
wherein a relationship of the size and/or placement of ~~between the~~ guide surface and ~~the size and/or placement of~~ the opposing surface of said magnet is defined for the purpose of limiting displacement of ~~the moving body~~ said first and second movable guides in a width direction, which is orthogonal to ~~the~~ a travelling direction of ~~the moving body~~ each of said first and second movable guides, to an allowable range, using a magnetic attractive force in

the width direction produced in accordance with an amount of deviation of the opposing surface of said magnet from the guide surface owing to displacement, which can occur when ~~the moving body~~ each of said first and second movable guides moves ~~along the guide surface, parallel to the guide surface~~ and in the width direction.

2. (Original) The assembly according to claim 1, wherein size of the guide surface in the width direction is defined by a groove, which extends along the travelling direction, provided in the top side of said guide, and a terminus, which extends along the travelling direction, of the top side of said guide.

3. (Original) The assembly according to claim 1, wherein the top side of said guide is provided with a protrusion, which extends along the travelling direction, so as to oppose said magnet, and said guide surface is formed by the top side of said protrusion opposing said magnet.

4. (Original) The assembly according to claim 2, wherein the size of the guide surface in the width direction is the same as or smaller than the size of the opposing surface of said magnet in the width direction.

5. (Original) The assembly according to claim 3, wherein the size of the guide surface in the width direction is the same as or smaller than the size of the opposing surface of said magnet in the width direction.

6. (Currently Amended) The assembly according to claim 1, wherein said magnet is provided on ~~the moving body~~ said first and second movable guides at a plurality of locations spaced apart along the travelling direction of said moving body.

7. (Currently Amended) The assembly according to claim 1, wherein, with respect to at least said first movable guide, the guide surface extends along the travelling direction on both sides of said guide, ~~the moving body~~ said first movable guide has an opposing surface that opposes each of the guide surfaces, and each of the opposing surfaces is provided with said magnet;

an outer end portion of the opposing surface of each magnet and an outer end portion of the guide surface being in agreement, or the outer end portion of the opposing surface of each magnet projecting beyond the outer end portion of the guide surface by a prescribed amount.

8. (Original) The assembly according to claim 2, wherein the size of the guide surface in the width direction is the same as or greater than the size of the opposing surface of said magnet in the width direction.

9. (Original) The assembly according to claim 3, wherein the size of the guide surface in the width direction is the same as or greater than the size of the opposing surface of said magnet in the width direction.

10. (Original) The assembly according to claim 1, wherein an end portion of the guide surface along the travelling direction is defined by an end portion of the guide surface.

11. (Original) The assembly according to claim 2, wherein an end portion of the guide surface along the travelling direction is defined by a groove that extends in a direction orthogonal to the travelling direction.

12. (Original) The assembly according to claim 3, wherein an end portion of the guide surface along the travelling direction is defined by an end portion, which extends along the travelling direction, of the top side of said protrusion.

13. (Currently Amended) The assembly according to claim 1, wherein, with respect to at least said first movable guide, the guide surface extends along the travelling direction on both sides of said guide, ~~the moving body~~ said first movable guide has an opposing surface on both ends thereof that opposes each of the guide surfaces, and each of the opposing surfaces is provided with said magnet;

one end portion of ~~the moving body~~ said first movable guide being provided with a hydrostatic bearing opposing a side face of said guide orthogonal to said guide surface.

14. (Original) A table device having the bearing assembly set forth in claim 1.

15. (Original) An exposure apparatus comprising:

exposure means for projecting part of a pattern on a master plate onto a substrate via an exposure optical system, and exposing the substrate to a prescribed exposure area of the pattern on the master plate; and

a table device having the bearing assembly, which is set forth in claim 1, for moving the master plate and/or substrate for exposure.

16. (Original) A semiconductor manufacturing method that uses the

exposure apparatus set forth in claim 15.

17. (New) A stage apparatus comprising:

a guide provided with a surface comprising a magnetic body;

a moving body movable along the surface in a first direction and a second direction;

a first movable guide which moves in the second direction, moves said moving body in the second direction and guides said moving body in the first direction;

a second movable guide which moves in the first direction, and moves said moving body in the first direction and guides said moving body in the second direction; and

magnets placed in said first and second movable guides, which produce magnetic attractive forces with the magnetic body,

wherein the magnetic body and said magnets are provided so that movement of said first movable guide in the second direction is limited by the magnetic

attractive force and movement of said second movable guide in the first direction is limited by the magnetic attractive force.

18. (New) The apparatus according to claim 17, wherein said guide has a first groove extending along the first direction and a second groove extending along the second direction on the surface, and

wherein the movement of said first guide is limited by the first groove and the movement of said second guide is limited by the second groove.

19. (New) The apparatus according to claim 17, wherein said first and second movable guides are supported by said guide via a gas bearing, and

wherein said magnet is utilized for applying prepressure to the gas bearing.

20. (New) A stage apparatus comprising:

a guide provided with a surface comprising a magnetic body;

a moving body movable along the surface;

a gas bearing for supporting said moving body with respect to the surface; and

a magnet which is supplied to said moving body and produces a magnetic attractive force with said magnetic body,

wherein said magnet is supplied to limit movement of said moving body in a direction orthogonal to its travelling direction, and apply prepressure to said gas bearing.

21. (New) A stage apparatus comprising:

a stage base;

a moving body movable along a surface of said stage base in X and Y directions; and

a magnet which is supplied to said moving body and produces a magnetic attractive force,

wherein said magnetic body and said magnet are placed to limit movement of said moving body so that said moving body does not go beyond predetermined strokes in the X and Y directions.

22. (New) The apparatus according to claim 21, further comprising a gas bearing for supporting said moving body with respect to said stage base.

23. (New) The apparatus according to claim 22, wherein said magnet is also utilized to apply prepressure to said gas bearing.

24. (New) An exposure apparatus comprising:

exposure means for projecting part of a pattern on a master plate onto a substrate via an exposure optical system, and exposing the substrate to a prescribed exposure area of the pattern on the master plate; and

a stage apparatus, which is set forth in claim 17, for moving the master plate and/or substrate for exposure.

25. (New) An exposure apparatus comprising:

exposure means for projecting part of a pattern on a master plate onto a substrate via an exposure optical system, and exposing the substrate to a prescribed exposure area of the pattern on the master plate; and

a stage apparatus, which is set forth in claim 20, for moving the master plate and/or substrate for exposure.

26. (New) An exposure apparatus comprising:

exposure means for projecting part of a pattern on a master plate onto a substrate via an exposure optical system, and exposing the substrate to a prescribed exposure area of the pattern on the master plate; and

a stage apparatus, which is set forth in claim 21, for moving the master plate and/or substrate for exposure.